

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DPW-01 IO-03 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 L-02

PM-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 PRS-01

SS-14 AID-10 OMB-01 RSR-01 (ADP) W

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R 301232Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5306

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13713

FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO CINCPAC, USDAO SAIGON
USSAG NKP RTAFB FROM NHA TRANG JULY 28 BEING REPEATED
FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE NHA TRANG 734

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 WEEKLY CEASE-FIRE OVERVIEW, JULY 22-28

1. BY MID-MARCH, SIX WEEKS OR SO AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE
PARIS AGREEMENT, THE LEVEL OF COMBAT IN MR 2 WAS BEGINNING
TO DROP, AND IT REMAINED AT RELATIVELY LOW LEVELS UNTIL SHORTLY
BEFORE THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS COMMUNIQUE. SIX WEEKS AFTER
THE COMMUNIQUE, HOWEVER, THE REVERSE SEEMS TO BE TRUE:
MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE REGION HAS INTENSIFIED IN RECENT
DAYS, PARTICULARLY WHEN MEASURED IN CASUALTIES, AND THE
"REAL" CEASE-FIRE -- WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN WELCOMED, EVEN
IF IT WAS NOT REALLY EXPECTED -- NOW SEEMS AS REMOTE AS EVER.

2. REPORTED CASUALTY FIGURES FOR THE SEVEN-DAY PERIOD

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(JULY 20-26) COVERED BY OUR LAST THREE SIT REPS ROSE TO UNUSUALLY

HIGH LEVELS: 152 NVA/VC KILLED AND AT LEAST TEN CAPTURED; RVNAF, 49 KIA AND 155 WIA. ONLY ON JULY 27 DID THE CASUALTY COUNT DIP SOMEWHAT: NVA/VC, TEN KIA; RVNAF, ONE KIA AND SIX WIA. THE INCIDENT COUNT DID NOT REFLECT THE INTENSITY OF THE ACTION, REMAINING AT AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 16 PER DAY, HARDLY HIGHER THAN IN OTHER WEEKS SINCE JUNE 15.

3. THE CONTINUING RVNAF ATTEMPT TO RETAKE TRUNG NGHIA AND POLEI KRONG VILLAGES WEST OF KONTUM CITY ACCOUNTED FOR A CONSIDERABLE SHARE -- BUT BY NO MEANS ALL -- OF THE CASUALTIES. 23RD DIVISION COMMANDER BRIG. GEN TRAN VAN CAM EMPLOYED ARMOR IN SUPPORT OF HIS INFANTRY DURING THE WEEK, EVEN WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE TERRAIN OVER WHICH HIS TANKS WOULD BE MOVING WAS NOT IDEAL. THE RESULTS, AS REPORTED BY KONTUM POLOFF, WERE BAD: FIVE OF TEN TANKS PUT OUT OF ACTION WITHIN THE FIRST 24 HOURS. RELATIVELY GOOD WEATHER OVER KONTUM PERMITTED EXTENSIVE USE OF TACTICAL AIR (36 STRIKES ON JULY 27 ALONE), EVEN WHILE THE GROUND FIGHTING QUIETED DOWN SOMEWHAT TOWARD THE END OF THE WEEK. POLOFF INDICATES THAT ARVN MADE NO OBSERVABLE PROGRESS THIS WEEK TOWARD ITS GOAL OF RETAKING THE TWO VILLAGES, SO THE 23RD DIVISION MAY BE LESS THAN BUOYANT WHEN IT CELEBRATES THE 18TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING ON AUGUST 1.

4. ELSEWHERE IN THE HIGHLANDS, THE MOST NOTEWORTHY EVENT OF THE WEEK WAS A FRUITLESS 122 MM ROCKET ATTACK ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PLEIKU CITY. THIS IS THE KIND OF ENEMY ACTION TO WHICH SENIOR RVNAF COMMANDERS IN THE AREA HAVE PREVIOUSLY THREATENED TO RETALIATE, BUT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORT OF RETALIATION.

5. IF GVN FORCES ARE BOGGED DOWN IN THE HIGHLANDS, THEY REMAIN AGGRESSIVE IN THE COASTAL PROVINCES. OPERATIONS THAT IN OTHER YEARS WOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED "SEARCH AND DESTROY" WERE CONDUCTED THIS WEEK BY SECTOR FORCES IN PHU YEN AND BINH THUAN, EVIDENTLY WITH SIGNIFICANT RESULTS, WHILE IN BINH DINH BOTH SIDES CONTINUED TO TAKE CASUALTIES AS 22ND DIVISION AND TERRITORIAL FORCES CONTINUED THEIR CLEARING EFFORTS. AN EXCEPTION WAS TAM QUAN DISTRICT, WHERE THE DISTRICT CHIEF HAS HAD TO SUSPEND HIS LOW-KEY CLEARING OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO COMPENSATE FOR THE DEFICIENCIES OF THE 6TH RANGER GROUP. THE DISTRICT CHIEF ALSO COMPLAINED TO

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DEPARTING QUI NHON POLOFF THAT THE RANGERS, IN ADDITION TO MISTREATING THE CIVILIAN POPULACE, HAD REACHED UNAUTHORIZED (AND CLEARLY, IN HIS VIEW, DANGEROUS) ACCOMMODATIONS WITH ENEMY FORCES IN THE DISTRICT. TO JUDGE FROM THE DISTRICT CHIEF'S REACTION, SITUATIONS SUCH AS THAT INVOLVING THE RANGERS IN TAM QUAN ONLY GIVE PEACE A BAD NAME.

6. THE NON-EVENTS OF THE WEEK WERE THE SECHEDULED RELEASES BY THE

PRG OF ARVN PW'S (410, IN PLEIKU) AND SMALL GROUPS OF CIVILIAN
DETAINEES IN THREE OTHER PROVINCES. WE GATHER THAT THE BREAK-
DOWN OF THE WHOLE EXCHANGE PROCESS NATION-WIDE RESULTS FROM THE
DEMONSTRATION IN LOC NINH, THE IMPASSE AT THE CENTRAL TPJMC, AND
(AT LEAST IN THE PLEIKU CASE) ICCS UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY TO
OBSERVE THE RELEASES, BUT OTHERWISE IS NOT ATTRIBUTABLE TO
LOCAL FACTORS IN MR 2. CENTRAL TPJMC DELEGATES DID TRAVEL FROM
PLEIKU TO DUC CO JULY 25, BUT WE HAVE NO REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF
THEIR VISIT, IF ANY, THEY TRAVELED BY HELICOPTER AFTER T MR

2 COMMANDER, MAJ. GEN. TOAN, RELAXED HIS STRICTURES AGAINST
FLIGHTS INTO ENEMY-CONTROLLED TERRITORY; THE SAME CHANGE OF
POLICY MAY FACILITATE AN "EXCHANGE" OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL PRG
PERSONNEL AT NEWLY-AGREED SITES IN BINH THUAN, HOME PROVINCE
OF TRUCE REGION IV.

7. THE ICCS IN REGIONS III AND IV APPEARS TO HAVE GONE INTO
TOTAL SOMNOLENCE. WITH THE LAST CANADIANS GONE AND THE
INDONESIANS (LIKE OURSELVES) CONVERTING FROM FIRST TO SECOND
TRANCHE, INACTIVITY WILL BE THE RULE, PROBABLY UNTIL A
REPLACEMENT FOR THE CANDEL IS FOUND; THE HUNGARIANS, IN
PARTICULAR, HAVE TOLD US THEY SEE NO POSSIBILITY OF WORKING
EVEN TEMPORARILY IN A THREE-PARTY AGGRANGEMENT. THUS THE ONLY
ACTIVITY REPORTED DURING THE WEEK CONSISTED OF A COUPLE OF SOLO
"OBSERVATION" TRIPS TO THE SCENES OF INCIDENTS, IN THE GRAND
OLD CANADIAN TRADITION, BY AN INDODEL WORKING OUT OF PHAN
THIET.

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